

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 6 September 1968



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THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
6 SEPTEMBER 1968

1. Soviet Union

The Soviet military had a key role in the decision to invade Czechoslovakia [REDACTED]

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By this account--and much of it matches up with other reporting--Kosygin, Suslov, and Shelepin were opposed to intervention; Brezhnev could not make up his mind. The final decision was made after General Yakubovsky, Warsaw Pact forces commander, told the Politburo the Czechoslovak Army was preparing to back a "rightist" coup. Yakubovsky was supported by other military leaders, but not by the defense minister, Marshal Grechko. Grechko urged considerably more restraint.

2. Czechoslovakia

Czechoslovak leaders have taken to the hustings trying to hold popular support and yet establish conditions for Soviet troop withdrawal. Yesterday Dubcek, Cernik, and Svoboda visited factories where they urged workers not to provoke Russian soldiers and called for "unity, consideration, and reason." These themes also are being stressed by Prague press media.

The Moscow press, however, continues to hold that the "counterrevolutionary" threat has not ended. This is the rationale for what probably will become a lengthy presence on Czechoslovak soil.

There also are some indications that the Warsaw Five are tolerating Dubcek only temporarily. [REDACTED]

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3. Rumania

The nine-day truce in Soviet press attacks on Rumania was broken Wednesday when Pravda let it be known Moscow is still displeased with Bucharest's criticism. There are no new military developments relating to Rumania, however. The Bulgarians continue a military exercise; Yugoslav and Rumanian troops remain on alert.

4. Hungary

Party boss Janos Kadar is reported to be a bitter man indeed. He is angry with the Soviets for making the Hungarians join the invasion, thus shattering his painstakingly rebuilt image of a reformed Hungary. He is equally angry with Dubcek for rejecting a last-minute appeal to "reason."

Kadar believes that as the crisis developed he stuck his neck out in support of Dubcek's reforms and in opposition to the hardliners. On 18 August, the Soviets sent Kadar to make one more try at getting the Czechoslovaks to mend their ways. Dubcek, who by this time was highly nervous and excited, flatly rejected Kadar's appeal, apparently in rather undiplomatic language.

Some aspects of the 18 August meeting have been leaked to the press by the Hungarians--a move which Kadar hopes might salvage some prestige.

5. Iran

An earthquake at home and the invasion of Czechoslovakia notwithstanding, the Shah is going ahead with plans to visit the Soviet Union later this month. He is aware that the timing is awkward, but he is seemingly determined to push ahead in his quest for better relations with Moscow. We do not expect any major new economic or military equipment contracts to emerge from this visit.

6. North Korea

Next Monday the regime will put on a major show for its 20th anniversary. The occasion has sparked a number of rumors about the Pueblo crew.

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The Secretary-General of the Japanese Communist Party returned from North Korea Tuesday and remarked cryptically to newsmen that "it appears there will be some progress with regard to the Pueblo on 9 September." We are trying now to get this clarified, but, in present form, it could mean anything from release to a trial of the crew.

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The North Koreans have invited guests from about 90 countries to the celebration. One way or the other, the Pueblo case is likely to be a feature attraction.

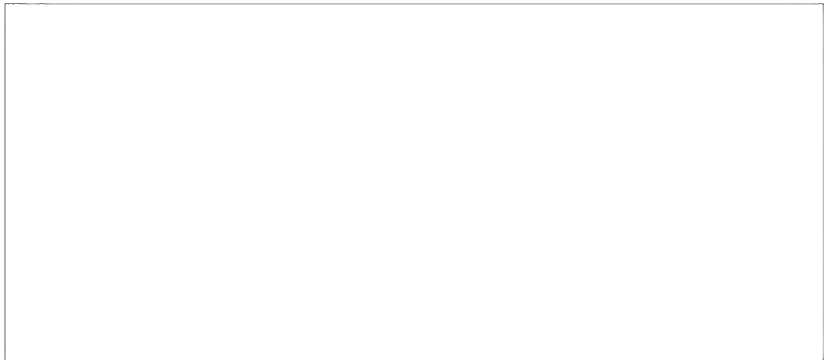
7. Soviet Union

Satellite photography shows that the Soviets are slowly closing down some of their vulnerable surface launch pads for the SS-4, an early strategic missile with a 1,000-mile range. The SS-4 was sent to Cuba in 1962 and has been deployed extensively in European Russia.

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8. Soviet Union -
Egypt



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9. Guatemala

The US Embassy feels the Guatemalan Government is making every effort to apprehend Ambassador Mein's killers but reports no new leads on their whereabouts. The terrorists continue to threaten further assassinations

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The government is ready to meet violence with violence.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes



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Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only

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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION

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More on Western Trade: There are more signs that Hanoi is moving ahead with postwar economic planning.

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Hanoi will be sending a group of officials to France next month to negotiate purchase agreements with various French industrial firms.

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North Vietnam is said to be interested primarily in the fields of steel production, chemistry, electronics, and light industry.

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Indeed, the prospects for any significant North Vietnamese trade with non-Communist countries are clouded by Hanoi's extremely limited ability to generate foreign exchange through exports. It seems likely that the mission to France will be mainly another attempt to explore Western sources of support for postwar economic reconstruction.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL
ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

There is nothing of significance to report today.

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